

## **Preliminary Thoughts on Preparing a Digital Edition of the *Bdinski Sbornik***

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Though anyone will readily agree that digital editions offer a much fuller and different range of facilities to their users than traditional print editions, preparing a digital edition of a text which already has been the object of a print edition will require the editor to thoroughly justify his plans, the more so if the text he sets about to digitalize and edit, has been dealt with in an apparently exhaustive manner already. This is in fact the case with the *Bdinski Sbornik*, which recently has been selected as the object of a future digital edition project. The text edition published along with a critical apparatus by Jan Scharpé and F. Vyncke in 1973, had been immediately preceded by a facsimile edition by Ivan Dujčev (1972). Apparently, the most conspicuous advantage of a digital edition, viz. making exact reproductions of the original manuscript available to a wider academic public, had thus already been provided for, and the text edition seems at a first glance to supply what else would be required by further research. This situation asks for a principled justification of all the components that shall form part of the prospective digital edition in terms of the advantages it might have over the extant print editions. This task, which the present paper shall try to tackle, addresses two different aspects of evaluation. The first requires a critical reappraisal of the merits and also the possible shortcomings of the extant print editions. The amount of additional knowledge that has accumulated over the four decades since the publication of both books, starting with Helmut Keiperts review articles published in the 1970s and leading up to Maja Petrova-Taneva's groundbreaking work of recent years shall be determined in order to estimate the minimal surplus value a reedition of any kind would achieve, anyway.

The second aspect more specifically concerns the technical components which shall form part of the overall design of the digital edition. It shall be explored which kinds of linguistic and cultural research might profit considerably from powerful and effective search engines and other technical devices which print editions must of necessity lack. As an example, attention will be paid to possible applications in variationist linguistic research, especially patterns of variation found in translations. Thus, in the past research into specific profiles of schools of translation not to mention of individual translators on the basis of print editions asked for a tremendous amount of time and energy, and was therefore regularly carried out in a spot-check fashion with intuitive generic conclusions in place of detailed and statistically founded insights. Research of this kind is expected to essentially profit from flexible search parameters which would allow to create one's own tailor-made data base on the basis of the digital edition. A potential user's approach will be taken to determine how the ideal interface for variationist translation studies could possibly look like.